

Greta Thunberg and her band of climate alarmists have to grow up

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Body

Greta Thunberg is perhaps the world's most famous climate alarmist, yet her main contribution to this week's Cop26 summit has been a foul-mouthed attack on world leaders gathered in Glasgow. To claps and cheers from fellow activists she declared: "No more exploitation, no more blah blah blah. No more whatever the f*** they're doing inside there." She was later filmed singing "You can shove your climate crisis up your arse".

The adolescent egotism of eco-warriors like Thunberg raises an important question: do these activists actually want to help find solutions to the climate crisis or is the priority throwing tantrums and droning on about the end of times?

Behind the scenes, the real work on climate change is continuing in Glasgow. World leaders may have left but it is now that the gruelling business of multilateral negotiations kicks in: this means working through details like transparency and verification to ensure that countries are doing what they say they will do; finding a mechanism for speeding up carbon reduction over the next 30 years; and trying to establish the structures for a global carbon market to underpin offsetting.

All of this is critical if the world is to remain on track to reduce emissions. There are concrete actions being taken: a pledge by more than 100 countries to halt and reverse deforestation by 2030 may not be as attractive to some as protesting in the streets but it is designed to bring lasting change.

This is in stark contrast to the circus antics of the eco-warriors - loosely based around mass protests, a contempt for the rule of law and gibberish about the end of capitalism - which are increasingly alienating and counterproductive. It makes even less sense when the issue they claim to care about more than anything is at centre-stage like never before.

A problem as challenging and significant as climate change requires a broad coalition of people and voices. It demands seriousness and commitment from governments, as well as a willingness to engage constructively on the part of activists.

If eco-warriors like Thunberg and her fellow travellers really believe in the imminent collapse of civilisation and are serious in wanting a better future for everyone, they need to grow up and start to work with governments and world leaders before it really is too late.

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